



**TMT Communications Working Group
Tabletop Exercise After Actions Report
February 1, 2007**



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Recommendation

The TMT recommends training be conducted that addresses Incident Command Structure, focusing on transfer of command and field communications. To ensure efficient incident management, the training should be based on the following procedures.

Initial Steps (first responder to arrive at incident)

1. Verify exact location.
2. Assess incident site stability.
3. Determine severity of incident.
4. Contact appropriate agency, Transportation Management Center (TMC) or Communications Center (SUSCOM, KENTCOM, RECOM, or Wilmington Communication Center).
 - a. If Police/Fire, contact Communications Center. Communications Center relays information to the TMC.
 - b. If DelDOT, contact the TMC. The TMC relays information to the appropriate Communications Center.
5. Stabilize scene as best as possible until support arrives.

Incident Commander

1. Incident Commander arrives on the scene and officially takes command of the incident.
2. Incident Commander establishes an incident command post.
 - a. Select an Operations Supervisor or Designee from each agency for each operational period; when command is transferred, the process must include a briefing that captures all essential information for continuing safe and effective operations.
 - i. Fire Chief – rescue efforts
 - ii. Police – incident investigation
 - iii. DNREC – hazmat incident
 - iv. DelDOT – restoration of transportation system
 - b. Keep each other informed of specific requirements;
 - c. Establish consolidated incident objectives, priorities, and strategies;
 - d. Coordinate to establish a single system for ordering resources;
 - e. Develop a consolidated Incident Action Plan (IAP), written or oral, evaluated and updated at regular intervals; and
 - f. Establish procedures for joint decision-making and documentation.
 - i. Each agency Supervisor or Designee reports and serves as a liaison to the Incident Commander.
 - ii. Incident Commander delegates commands to Supervisor or Designee.
 - iii. Supervisor or Designee communicates commands to their agencies.
 - iv. Supervisor or Designee remains with Incident Commander at command post all times.



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Chapter 1: Exercise Overview

Exercise Name:

Communications Working Group Tabletop Exercise

Duration

1 day

Exercise Date

March 29, 2006

Sponsor

Delaware Department of Transportation

Type of Exercise

Tabletop Exercise (TTX)

Funding Source

Delaware Department of Transportation

Focus

- ☒ Response
- ☒ Recovery
- ☐ Prevention
- ☐ Other

Classification

- ☐ Unclassified (U)
- ☒ For Official Use Only (FOUO)
- ☐ By Invitation Only (IO)

Scenario

Fuel Tanker explosion during crash with three passenger cars



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Location

State Fire Training Center in Dover, DE

Contract Support

Edwards and Kelcey, Inc.

Participants

State Agencies:

Delaware Department of Transportation
Delaware State Fire School
Delaware Emergency Management Agency
Delaware State Police
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Delaware Department of Health and Social Services
Delaware Civil Air Patrol
Delaware National Guard

Local Agencies:

New Castle County Emergency Management
Kent County 911 Center
Kent County Fire Center
Kent County Emergency Management
Dover Fire Department
Cheswold Fire Department
Wilmington Fire Department

Exercise Director

Robert Newnam, Director of Delaware State Fire School

Exercise Development

A Tabletop Exercise Planning Committee was formed to develop the exercise. Committee members included:

Trish Faust (DeIDOT),
Robert Newnam (DE Fire School),
Lew Briggs (DSP),
Dwayne Day (DEMA),
Regis Wagner (Edwards and Kelcey), and
Jennifer Duval (Edwards and Kelcey).



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The committee participated in three planning meetings at the Delaware State Fire School on February 6, 2006, February 21, 2006, and March 24, 2006.

Exercise Structure

There were three groups of participants during the exercise: field, communications, and unified command. As specific events in the exercise unfolded, participants "entered" the exercise as if responding in real time. Participants did not enter the exercise until instructed. Those not involved observed, but did not to participate.

Exercise Participants

The exercise staff (facilitators, and evaluators) comprised of individuals representing subject-matter experts, and the Communications Working Group TTX Planning Committee.

Participants were agency personnel who responded to the situations as presented based on experience and knowledge, as well as on plans and procedures designed for the specific type of event. During the exercise, they discussed roles and responsibilities, as well as proposed actions.

Facilitators were subject-matter experts that were placed in the various functional rooms to facilitate discussions and guide players to address the desired objectives. They took an active role in engaging the participants and encouraging play, but did not interfere with the flow of the exercise.

Evaluators were chosen from various agencies and jurisdictions to evaluate and comment on how well the exercise objectives were achieved. They had a passive role during the exercise and only noted the actions and decisions of the players; they did not interfere with the flow of the exercise. Most importantly, evaluators assisted with identifying issues in the after-action report.

Observers viewed all or selected portions of play during the exercise. They did not participate in exercise play or exercise control functions



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Chapter 2: Exercise Goals and Objectives

Goal

To offer participants an opportunity to practice, test and evaluate interagency coordination, incident command structure and field communications in the event of an incident on Delaware's roadways.

Exercise Objectives

Primary Objectives

1. Evaluate interagency coordination
 - a. Verification of location, assessment of site stability and severity of the incident are determined
 - b. Assurance that necessary information reaches the proper agencies, including the TMC
 - c. Stabilization of the incident scene until additional responders arrive
2. Test incident command structure
 - a. Establishment of the Incident Commander and incident command post
 - b. Assurance that the incident command structure is understood and followed
 - c. Assurance that agency supervisors relay necessary information to the Incident Commander
 - d. Assurance of smooth transition between incident command and unified command structure
 - e. Assurance of smooth transition between incident commanders including a briefing capturing all essential information
3. Test field communications
 - a. Role of agency supervisors as liaisons between Incident Commander and their resources
 - b. Establishment of a Incident Action Plan (IAP) with Incident Commander and agency supervisors

Secondary Objectives

- Implement traffic control (short-term and long-term)
- Establish emergency site access (short-term and long-term)
- Demonstrate the ability to recover, triage, and transport victims
- Demonstrate the ability to mitigate the incident (short-term and long-term)
- Demonstrate the ability to simulate a Level II SERT response
- Demonstrate news media control and public information dissemination



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Chapter 3: Exercise Events Synopsis

At 10:00 AM on a Friday in July, KENTCOM dispatch receives numerous calls reporting a tanker explosion on SR-1.

Nature of Incident:

1. Gasoline tanker explosion.
2. Gasoline tanker currently on fire with 3 other vehicles damaged.
3. Entire section of Southbound SR-1 severely damaged due to extreme heat of fire.

Month/Day/Time:

In July on a Friday between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM. Exercise to occur in "real time."

Location:

SR-1 Southbound at the Scarborough Road Exit (not on ramp), approaching the toll plaza.

Report of victims:

1. Tanker driver fatal
2. Eight (8) injuries in three (3) cars including:
 - a. Three (3) Priority 1 patients who are severely trapped in one car
 - b. Five (5) Priority 2 patients
 - i. Two (2) are not trapped in one car
 - ii. Three (3) are trapped in one car

Water Supply: Available

Weather Conditions: Cloudy, Low 90s, approaching thunderstorms, tornado watches in effect

Wind Speed and Direction:

- Begins out of the west at 10 mph
- During thunderstorm inject:
 - Wind around to the Southwest at 15 mph
 - Then from the South at 20 mph with the thought a thunderstorm line is moving through the incident area
- Once the storm has passed, the winds become calm

Resources: All crews on duty and available

Incident Conditions

1. Heavy traffic due to vacationers heading to the Delaware and Maryland shore points.
2. Northbound flow of traffic has stopped due to flames, heat and heavy smoke in area.



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Chapter 4: Analysis of Critical Task Performance

The following summary is compiled from comments submitted by the Tabletop Exercise facilitators and participants.

Task: Interagency Coordination

Communication between agencies was noted as a top issue. Agencies typically worked well together during the exercise, although some became controlling at times. It was observed that each agency has separate plans that don't always work well together. Every agency needs to understand their specific role during a SERT response while being mindful of other agency roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation: Incident Command Flow needs more training especially concerning the transfer of command. Other areas needing focus are assignment of duties, delegation of tasks, and communication. Agencies need to consider each others plans when drafting/changing their own procedures.

Task: Incident Command Structure

The ability to apply the concepts of unified command was noted as a top issue. There was an overall lack of experience and training on the part of the participants regarding Unified Command Structure. Once each agency completes their function on scene, they need to remember to transfer command.

Recommendation: Additional training in Incident Command/Unified Command and practical exercise. Incident Command Flow needs more practice/training especially concerning the hand-off of command. ICS forms that guide the incident command and serve as a checklist should be used to ensure establishment of a Public Information Officer (PIO) and development of an Action Plan. The Fire School is working on putting together field guides that will help with this.

Task: Field Communications

Information flow to the TMC from the scene was good. Resource sharing worked well, and all resources required were available. When communicating, plain language needs to be used; however some acronyms should be well known, like SERT. Anyone not familiar with such terms is in need of training. Field communications seemed to break down, especially between field and command. Incident Commander Information didn't get passed along to field. There were several issues with the radios during the exercise including some had fixed channels; some were never switched to Statewide Mutual Aid; and many talk groups were being used simultaneously on the scene. Additionally, police and fire were on the same channel but needed to be separated.

Recommendation: Additional practice/training in field communications. Also, there is an essential need for real-time data in field.